

VOA NEWS

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This is VOA News. I'm Alexis Strobe.

The U.S. says Israel has agreed to [the] the framework for a Gaza cease-fire. Hamas now must decide. AP correspondent Mimmi Montgomery reports.

A senior U.S. administration official says Israel has essentially endorsed a framework of a proposed Gaza cease-fire and hostage release deal, adding that it's now up to Hamas to agree to it.

The comments come before mediation talks were to resume in Egypt with hopes of brokering a deal to pause fighting before the holy month of Ramadan.

A deal would also allow aid to reach hundreds of thousands of desperate Palestinians in northern Gaza, many facing starvation. According to the official, the proposal includes a six week cease-fire and release of hostages considered vulnerable, including the sick and wounded, elderly and women.

Hamas are expected to respond to mediators Qatar and Egypt.

I'm Mimmi Montgomery.

Yemen's internationally recognized government reported Saturday that the Rubymar cargo ship attacked last month by Houthi militants has sunk in the southern Red Sea. Reuters correspondent Lucy Fielder has more.

A government statement said the ship sank in the southern Red Sea on Friday night and warned of an environmental catastrophe. The ship was carrying more than 41,000 tons of fertilizer when it came under attack.

The U.S. military Central Command has said the Houthis say they are acting in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza.

On Monday, a Yemeni government team visited the Rubymar, a Belize-flagged U.K.-owned cargo ship, and said it was partially submerged and could sink within a couple of days.

The U.S. military previously said the attack could significantly damaged the freighter and caused an 18-mile oil slick.

Houthi attacks have prompted shipping firms to divert vessels onto the longer, more expensive route around southern Africa.

The United States and Britain began striking Houthi targets in Yemen in January in retaliation for the attacks on shipping in the Red Sea, Bab el-Mandeb Strait and Gulf of Aden.

Lucy Fielder from Reuters.

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The U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention Friday formally updated its guidelines for isolation after testing positive for COVID-19, reducing recommended isolation periods from 5 days to 24 hours for people with mild or improving symptoms. AP Washington correspondent Sagar Meghani reports.

CDC chief Mandy Cohen says the new guidance is an effort to pair COVID recommendations with long-standing ones for flu and other respiratory illnesses.

"Folks often don't know what virus they have when, when they first get sick, so this will help them know what to do regardless."

The change comes with COVID no longer the health menace it once was. Most people have some degree of immunity at this point, whether from infections or vaccinations.

I'm Sagar Meghani.

Donald Trump has won Missouri's Republican caucuses and he's captured all 39 delegates that were up for grabs at the Michigan party convention. The former president also is awaiting the results later Saturday of the Idaho caucuses as he looks to gain more ground toward clinching the GOP nomination.

His last major rival, former U.N. ambassador Nikki Haley, is still seeking her first election season win.

There are no Democratic contest Saturday.

The next event on the Republican calendar is Sunday in the District of Columbia. Two days later is Super Tuesday when 16 states and American Samoa will hold primaries.

Firefighters face difficult weather conditions as they battle the largest wildfire in Texas history. AP correspondent Julie Walker reports.

They live in the community they protect, Wheeler Volunteer Fire Department firefighters battling the Smokehouse Creek fire, the largest wildfire in Texas.

Twenty-one-year-old Chase Helton: "We don't wanna be on the fires. We don't like them fires... But we enjoy what we do and we're thankful to help the community."

He's at the front of the truck dousing the flames. Twenty-five-year-old ??? Marshall drives the truck through the intense blaze in an effort to help contain it.

"Everybody's trying to do the same thing and get it all put out safely and get to go home."

The massive fire leaving a charred landscape of scorched prairie, dead cattle and destroying as many as 500 structures in the Texas Panhandle, merging with another fire and crossing the state line into Oklahoma.

I'm Julie Walker.

The lawyers who successfully argued that a massive pay package for Tesla CEO Elon Musk was illegal and should be voided are asking the presiding judge to award company stock worth \$5.6 billion as legal fees.

The attorneys represented Tesla shareholders in the case decided in January and made the request in court papers filed Friday.

The amount would be the largest such award if approved. Lawyers in cases stemming from (the) collapse of Enron got a record \$688 million in legal fees in 2008.

The lawyers say the sum was justified because they wouldn't have been paid if they lost, and the benefits to Tesla "was massive."

I'm Alexis Strobe, VOA New(s).